

earth god by burying them alive.¹ If the story is true—and
 it rests
 on the authority of Herodotus, a nearly contemporary witness
 —we
 may surmise that the aged queen acted thus with an eye
 to the
 future rather than to the past— she hoped that the
 grim god of
 the nether-world would accept the young victims in her
 stead, and
 let her live for many years. The same idea of vicarious
 suffering
 conies out in a tradition told of a certain Hova king of
 Madagascar,
 who bore the sonorous name of Andriamasinavalona. When
 he had
 grown sickly and feeble, the oracle was consulted as to the
 best way
 of restoring him to health. "The following result was
 the con-
 sequence of the directions of the oracle. A speech was first
 delivered
 to the people, offering great honours and rewards to the
 family of
 any individual who would freely offer himself to be
 sacrificed, in
 order to the king's recovery. The people shuddered at
 the idea,
 and ran away in different directions. One man, however,
 presented
 himself for the purpose, and his offer was accepted. The
 sacrificer
 girded up his loins, sharpened his knife, and bound the
 victim.
 After which, he was laid down with his head towards the east,
 upon
 a mat spread for the purpose, according to the custom with
 animals
 on such occasions, when the priest appeared, to proceed
 with all
 solemnity in slaughtering the victim by cutting his
 throat. A
 quantity of red liquid, however, which had been prepared
 from a
 native dye, was spilled in the ceremony; and, to the
 amazement
 of those who looked on, blood seemed to be flowing all around.
 The
 man, as might be supposed, was unhurt; but the king
 rewarded him
 and his descendants with the perpetual privilege of
 exemption from
 capital punishment for any violation of the laws. The
 descendants
 of the man to this day form a particular class, called
Tay maty
inanota, which may be translated, 'Not dead, though
 transgressing.'
 Instances frequently occur, of individuals of this class
 appropriating
 bullocks, rice, and other things belonging to the
 sovereign, as if
 they were their own, and escaping merely with a reprimand,
 while

a common person would have to suffer death, or be reduced to slavery." -

Sometimes, however, the practices intended to prolong the king's Other sac-life seem to rest on a theory of nutrition rather than of substitution ; rifices for ^ in other words, the life of the victims, instead of being offered fh^khfg's* vicariously to a god, is apparently supposed to pass directly into the life appear body of the sacrificer, thus refreshing his failing strength and pro- to b(r longing his existence. So regarded, the custom is magical rather "ather^har than religious in character, since the desired effect is thought to religious, follow directly without the intervention of a deity. At all events, it can be shown that sacrifices of this sort have been offered to prolong the life of kings in other parts of the world. Thus in regard to

¹ lieruduUis, vii. 114; Plutarch, ² W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar*
A: sn/wstiti{>nei 13. (London, N.D.), i. 344-^